



OLD  
COUNTRY  
CHURCHES  
SUSSEX COUNTY

Robert H. Robinson

Daniel G. Coston Jr.

BR555

D4

R64





**C**hrist - 22



# Christ Church

Although regular services are not held in Old Christ Church throughout the year and officially it could be considered a "closed" church, it is still thriving and strong. Much of the reason for the church's vitality can be credited to "The Old Christ Church League", which, besides keeping up the church, draws attention to it through tours and publicity. Also services are held Sundays throughout the summer with a special service on Whit Sunday.

Added to its strong regional interest, Christ Church is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and detailed records and drawings have been made by the Historic American Building Survey and are on file in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

Besides all this, it's one of the few old country churches located near a picturesque body of water and to complete the scene, next to the church are towering trees over an old graveyard, which could stand alone as being scenic.

The church was built in 1771 by Robert Houston, who had a shipyard at Concord, and it's believed he used his ship carpenters to construct the church because of similarity of building techniques used in the church and in sailing craft. It should be mentioned that Houston was a Presbyterian.

For many years, the plaque put up by the state said that the church was built by Robert Holston. However, after the very thorough and complete history of the church was published by the late Henry H. Hutchinson, of Bethel, the state was convinced that Robert Houston, who was the great-grandfather of the former Congressman Robert G. Houston, was the builder. Hutchinson's history is in the summer edition of "The Archeolog," Vol. XV, No. 2.

Christ Church is unique in that it is one of the few Colonial churches still in existence that has not been restored, rebuilt or altered or added on to. Perhaps the reason is that the church, which can seat close to 500 persons, was most active early in its history and then later there wasn't enough members and money to "improve" the structure. The church has not even been painted. The red color is from insect repellent.

It began as a "chapel-of-ease" for the church located at Green Hill Town, a village that was about 12 miles southwest of Salisbury. Members of the church felt it was too far to travel that distance. The area where the church is now was once a busy center. There was a forge, a grist mill, a saw mill, several stores and it was on the main route to Salisbury. Laurel was known as the "wading place." However, the area at Chipman's Mill was soon to be diminished by the "wading place." First, Laurel, being at the head of navigation at Broad Creek, became a center for shipping. Then the railroad came through and the town "boomed." Then, of course, mills declined in importance.

St. Philip's Church was built in Laurel and this drew members who might have gone to Christ Church. As Hutchinson states, "Christ Church, which was the mother church of St. Mark's, St. John's, Little Hill and St. Philip's, had to retire and be taken care of by her third daughter, St. Philip's."

The "Old Christ Church League" is under the auspices of the vestry of the St. Philip's Church.

The tumultuous history of the country held back the growth of the church. First during the American Revolution, the members were mostly Tories. After several Tories started riots, the Continental Congress sent in troops to prevent rebellion against the Congress. Needless to say, it was hard to find a minister for Christ Church. During the Civil War many of the members were Southern sympathizers, and the rector resigned from Christ Church because he too was for the South. The Bishop of the Episcopal Church was a leader in the Union cause. Apparently, the minister at Christ Church became a "war casualty" though not on the firing line, as is aptly put by Hutchinson.

The inside has old-fashioned box pews which the congregation would rent. The income would help run the church. The church is especially known for its hanging pulpit above the reading desk or lectern. It's believed that the reason for the kneeling bench to be inclined rather than flat is because when the church was built, some members of the church were not members of the Anglican faith and would not take their communion while kneeling. The Anglicans would not take the communion standing. So the builders, according to the article in "The Archeolog", reached a compromise by making the kneeling bench halfway to suit those who wanted to kneel and those who didn't.

Most of the building is made of heart pine, and Hutchinson argues convincingly that this is how the church got its nickname in the past of "Old Lightwood," "Old Lighter" and "Old Lighterknot." In the old days split sticks of heart pine were sold for kindling fires. It's been reported that the church got its name because such wood was used inside for light. However, Hutchinson states that the wood was too resinous and gave off black smoke which would have caused sticky soot marks. The wood was used at camp meetings, such as at Sandhill, for lights outside. It would have been impractical to light it inside. The name, he says, probably came from the pine being used in construction.

The church is opened during the summer Sundays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and tours are conducted without charge. Special tours can be arranged by writing to "Old Christ Church League," at St. Philip's Church office in Laurel.

INVENTORY OF THE CHURCH  
ARCHIVES OF DELAWARE

*by the*

HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY

PRELIMINARY DRAFT NOW BEING  
CHECKED FOR FINAL ACCURACY

MARCH 1940

Binder #1

WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL AND SERVICE PROJECTS

OLD POST OFFICE BLDG.

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

532. Christ church, (Broad Creek), 1704--, 2 miles E. of Laurel.

Organized not later than 1704 as a mission of Stepney Parish. Little is known regarding the first church building, but it is thought to have stood on the same site as the present building erected about 1772. Church was incorporated Jan. 2, 1808. This became the mother church to many others in southwest Sussex County, being for a long period one of the largest and most important congregations in that part of the State. With the building of St. Philip's Church (entry 553) in Laurel, a mission of Christ Church, its importance declined since the new church was more conveniently located. Services were held less frequently until 1890, when they were discontinued except for yearly memorial services on Whitsunday. Building is plain unpainted frame structure of heart pine. High-backed pews, pulpit and slaves' gallery all of same material. Aside from the roof, which has been replaced several times, no extensive repairs have been made but the building is in good condition. First settled clergyman, Rev. Samuel Adams, 1794-64.

Minutes, 1833--, 1 vol.; Register, 1853--, 1 vol.; in possession of Mrs. H. Fooks, Laurel. Records of incorporation and deeds: Sussex Co. Recorder's office, Deeds Record; vol. AD27, p. 294; vol. BH81, p. 590; vol. BBM112, p. 205; vol. BBO114, p. 33; vol. BBP115, p. 352; vol. BBV121, p. 47; vol. DEG185, pp. 344 and 346.

533-535. ST ANNE'S PARISH, Middletown, 1704--,

533. OLD ST. ANNE'S CHURCH, 1 mile S. of Middletown. The Parish church, 1704-1872.

Organized not later than 1704, an order to survey ten acres of land on which to build a chapel for the congregation having been issued on September 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. The site selected was along the south bank of Appoquinimink Creek to the west of the Queen's Road (now Highway 71). The first church was probably a frame structure as it was reported as "boarded and covered" by October 11, 1704. There is some question as to its exact site but suitable sites within the limits of the original grant are limited, as the land is rolling. Also trees that appear to be remnants of the virgin forest scattered throughout the churchyard further restrict the possible sites. There is, however, a well defined rectangular space on a knoll directly southwest of the present church occupied by young trees and bushes, surrounded by older trees. Unless the first church were approximately on the same site as the present building, as is thought by some to be the case, it very likely stood on the knoll mentioned above, facing a side road. Due to a disagreement between the rector and his parishioners services were discontinued about 1728 but they were resumed shortly thereafter. As early as 1765 the present church was projected and some subscriptions were received. But work may not have been started until some time later, as the rector, Rev Philip Reading, wrote it was "upon the point of being finished" on October 2, 1771. It was closed for several years during the Revolutionary War. But except for this period it was occupied until 1872, when the congregation moved to the new church in Middletown. While it is not defunct, services are now held only during the month of August and on the second Sunday of June each year, when a Memorial Service is held. A covering for the communion table, embroidered with her initials "A.R." in silk, was presented to the church by Queen Anne. It is now in possession of St. Anne's Church in Middletown. A brick wall bearing various memorial plaques at the gates

PH0021822

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: Sussex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR 13 1972	

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Old Christ Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
"Old Lightwood"

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Junction of County Roads #465 and 465A, on S. bank of Chipmans Pond

CITY OR TOWN:  
Laurel, Delaware

STATE Delaware	CODE 10	COUNTY: Sussex	CODE 005
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
St. Philips Church, for the Diocese of Delaware

STREET AND NUMBER:  
South Central Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Laurel	STATE: Delaware	CODE 10
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
County Courthouse, Snow Hill, Md., Worcester Co. Deed Book for 1772

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Snow Hill	STATE: Maryland	CODE 24
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Building Survey

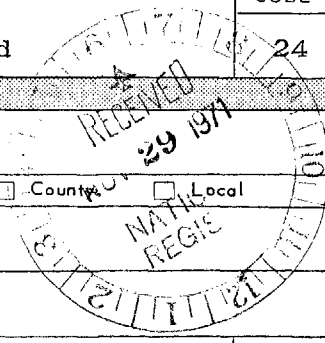
DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington, D.C.	STATE:	CODE
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE:  
COUNTY:  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This church in the northern part of Stepney Parish was closely patterned after the mother church at Green Hill, Maryland. The chief difference is that the Stepney church is built of brick, while Christ Church is built of wood, and so well built of fine-grained, resinous heart-of-pine planks that it is still in sound and excellent condition. It stands on a slight rise beside Chipman's Pond whose waters enter Broad Creek and eventually flow into the Nanticoke.

Only the white window sashes are painted. The rest of the structure has weathered to the rich golden brown of old pine needles. It seems a natural outgrowth from the pine woods behind it. The interior also is entirely unpainted save for the white window sashes. The wood has taken on a gratifying colour from age.

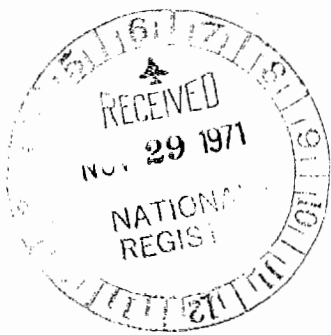
The windows are protected by solid plank shutters, which are fastened and locked with a unique hand wrought-iron "T"-iron locked with a wedge on the inside of the building.

The tall panelled pulpit, with a sounding-board and the clerk's reading-desk below and in front of it, stands in the traditional place, against the north wall, mid-way the length of the church. At the east end of the church, the altar is a plain table; the railing that surrounds it has slender turned spindles.

At the west end is the slaves' gallery, reached by a stair in the northwest corner. All the pews are of high-backed, square box type with doors, each pew large enough for a whole family; backs, doors and sides of the pews are all panelled. The wooden ceiling is a rather flattened barrel vault.

Altogether, the church as it stands today is a striking example of eighteenth-century native workmanship successfully adapting Georgian ecclesiastical tradition and precedent to a worthy expression in wood, the prevalent and only available building material of the region.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                        |                                       |                                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Paid for September 1772 A.D.**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                                  |                                                 |                                                         |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian            | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |                                                         | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |                                                 |                                                         | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

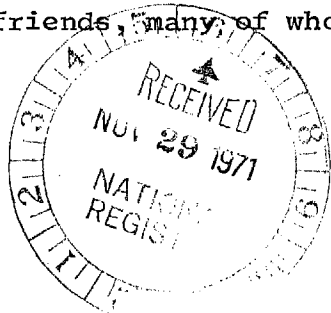
Christ Church, Broad Creek Hundred, was built in 1770 (finished 1772) as a Chapel of Ease of Stepney Parish in Maryland. Before the Revolutionary War, all the Church of England parishes in the American Colonies were part of the Diocese of London. When a parish had such widely extended territorial boundaries that many of the members found it difficult, at times well-nigh impossible, to attend the parish church, it was not unusual to build a "Chapel of Ease" in a neighborhood to accommodate the more distant parishioners. The Chapel of Ease continued under the same Rector as the parish church.

Stepney Parish was originally bounded on the north and west by the Nanticoke River and on the south and east by the Wicomoco River. The land whereon Christ Church, Broad Creek, now stands was claimed by Maryland until 1775.

Among the treasured heirlooms of Christ Church are two old silver chalices. Also, there are two ancient pewter alms basins and a pewter paten. The pewterer was Gleason. A Bible, said to have been presented by Queen Charlotte has disappeared.

Four Governors of Delaware have been members or communicants at Old Christ Church, Broad Creek; Governor (General) Nathaniel Mitchel, 1805-1808; Governor William B. Cooper, 1841-1845; Governor William H. Ross, 1851-1855; and our recent two term Governor, Elbert N. Carvel. Governor Nathaniel Mitchel is buried here.

Christ Church is in the charge of the Rector of St. Philip's Church, Laurel. Several special services each year are held in the old church and people come from long distances to attend them. Regular services have been discontinued since 1850. Cherished family associations with the old church assure care of the building by staunch friends, many of whom now live at a distance.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Scharf, J.T., "Scharf's History of Delaware." 1888.  
 Zebley, Frank R., "The Churches of Delaware." 1947.  
 Microfilms of Stepney Parish Records, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md.  
 Conrad, Henry C., "History of Delaware." 1908.  
 "Delaware History" of October 1960. Historical Society of Delaware,  
 Vol. IX, No. 2.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 33' 40"	75° 32' 16"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 3.8

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Mr. Rea Wilkie, Historic Registrar**

ORGANIZATION: **Div. of Historical and Cultural Affairs** DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Hall of Records**

CITY OR TOWN: **Dover** STATE: **Delaware** CODE: **10**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name E. Berkeley Tompkins  
**Dr. E. Berkeley Tompkins**

Title State Liaison Officer

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Robert M. Utley*  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

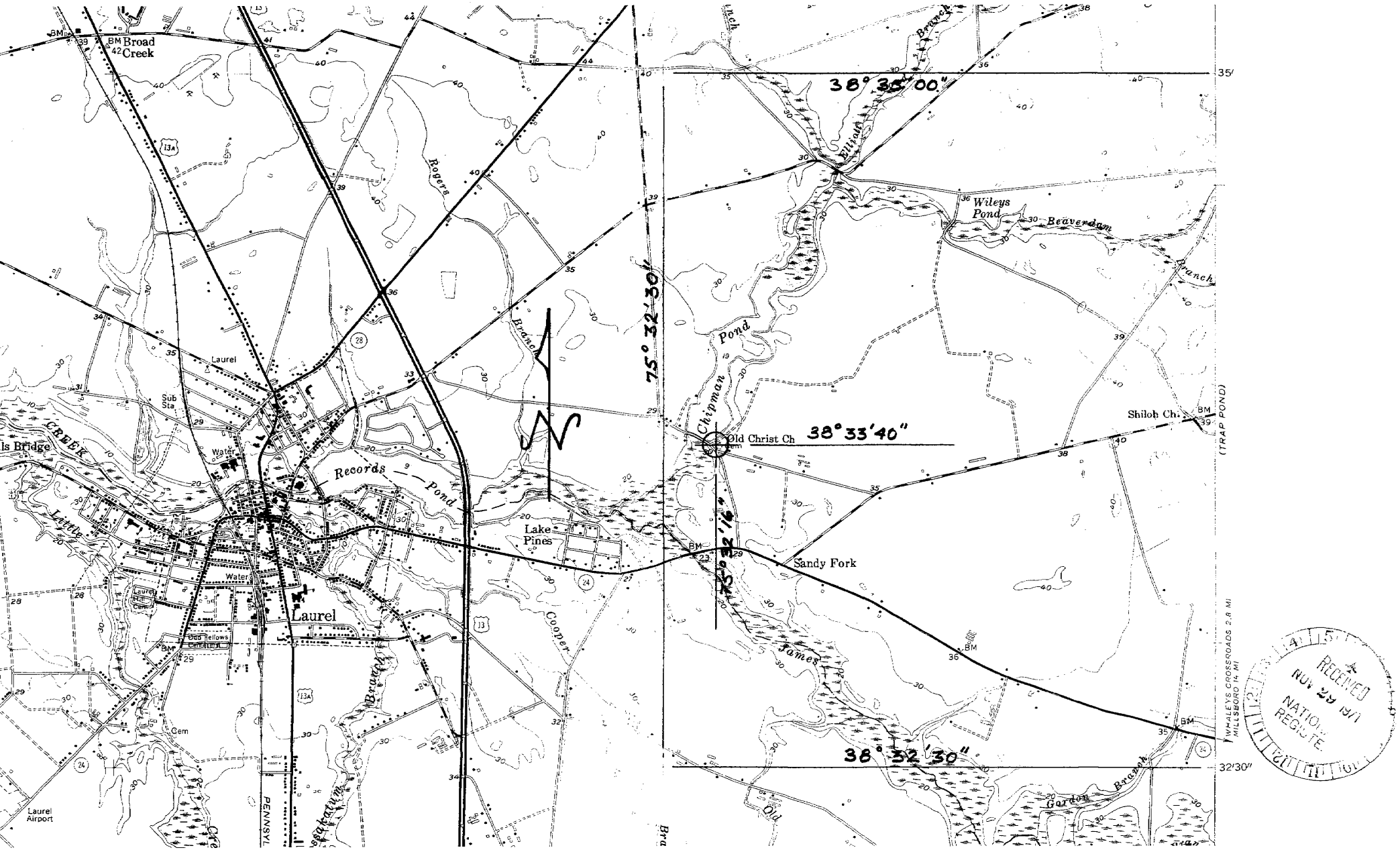
Date 4/13/72

ATTEST:  
*William F. Swartz*  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 APR 13 1972

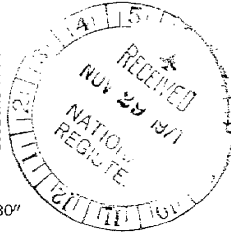
Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





WALEYS CROSSROADS 2.8 MI  
MILLSBORO 14 MI



# THE CHURCHES OF DELAWARE

by

FRANK R. ZEBLEY

Author of "Along the Brandywine"



*A history, in brief, of the nearly 900 churches  
and former churches in Delaware as  
located by the Author.*

1947



was purchased on Sept. 25, 1918 from Frank E. Lynch. Improvements were made, including brick-venereing the building, and a rededication service was held on Dec. 17, 1933. After extensive improvements to the chancel, rededication services were held on Mar. 2, 1940. This church maintains a large cemetery on e. State St.

The First Baptist Church at Delmar was organized in 1883. The church site at Main and Park Sts. was purchased on Mar. 27, 1883, from Elijah Freaney and the church was built during that year. It was dedicated on Sun., Nov. 25, 1883, by the Rev. Dr. G. J. Johnson, of the American Baptist Publication Soc. The church was officially recognized on Apr. 17, 1884. A rededication service was held on Apr. 20, 1884. Among those taking part were the Revs. J. T. Craig, James Hope and I. M. Haldeman. The evening sermon was preached by the Rev. M. Chandler of the Delmar M. E. Church. The church was rebuilt in 1925. A rededication service was held with Dr. Joseph T. Watts, Gen. Sec. for Maryland and the Rev. J. E. Berkstresser, the pastor, officiating. The church was incorporated on May 1, 1935.

Delmar Primitive Baptist Church was organized in 1882. The meetings were held in private homes and in a nearby grove. The church was built in 1883. The church site at Second and Jewel Sts. was purchased from Levin S. Hastings on Aug. 30, 1883.

The Roman Catholic Mission at Delmar was opened in 1941.

Metropolitan M. E. Zion Church, colored, at Delmar was built in 1919. The church site was purchased on Nov. 26, 1920, from Mary A. Hastings.

Old Forge A. M. E. Church was located beside James' Branch a short distance s. w. of the old Broad Creek Bridge. Near this point, a forge, a saw-mill and a grist-mill were erected in the late 1700's. The forge was the first to be abandoned, the saw-mill was closed about 1880 and the grist-mill was closed some time later.

On Sept. 16, 1848, James Horsey donated a half-acre church site to a group of free Africans headed by Samson Matthews. Old Forge Church was built and a graveyard was laid out. An active camp-meeting was conducted each year in the woods beside the church. The church was closed about 1909 and the land reverted to Wm. De Shields who had purchased the Horsey farm. There were no tombstones in the graveyard and there is nothing to mark the old site.

Christ P. E. Church, located three miles east of Laurel beside Chipman's Pond, was built in 1771. It was incorporated on Feb. 2, 1808. It is believed to have replaced a church built here at an earlier date.

Any definite information as to any deed or land grant to Christ Church before 1793 appears to be lost in the mists of history. As is generally known the ownership of the "Three Lower Counties," now Delaware, was in dispute between Lord Baltimore and Wm. Penn for many years. During this time, grants of land in Delaware were made by both Lord Baltimore and Wm. Penn. This applied especially to Sussex County and to the section close to the western boundary of the State. It is possible that a church site was granted to Christ Church by Lord Baltimore at the time the first church was built, but this is very doubtful.

This chapel at Broad Creek was a chapel-of-ease for Stepney Parish. Stepney Parish Church was Green Hill Church located at what was then Green

Hill Town about twelve miles s. w. of Salisbury. It is built of brick, has two doors, the old box pews, a high pulpit and an arched ceiling built of pine. A tiny bell hangs on the front gable which is surmounted by a wooden cross. It is very well kept, has spacious grounds and is close to the banks of the Wicomico River. Quite isolated at the present time, only annual services are held. It is now known as St. Bartholomew P. E. Church.

The present church at Chipman's Pond was built in 1771 and Robert Houston, the great grandfather of former Congressman Robert G. Houston, was the builder. In addition to his other interests, Mr. Houston operated a ship-yard at Concord. Some persons believe that Mr. Houston used his ship-carpenters to build the church and claim that the building shows evidence of joiner work as performed in ship-yards.

At the sale of the estate of John Mitchell, Robert Houston purchased 1 acre 90 poles of land for 1 pound, 10 shillings "lawful money of Delaware State." This purchase was made on behalf of the trustees of Christ Church who were Robert Houston, Jonathan Cartrell, Henry Edger, Wm. Vaughn, Leonard Houston and Geo. Bacon. The deed was acknowledged on May 1, 1793.

In the partition of the estate of Robert Houston, who owned several thousand acres of land, between his widow and his eight children, made by the Orphans' Court on May 4, 1797, the following appears: "We allot to the use of the Episcopal Church the quantity of two acres of land called "Ramble-indeed" for which the said Robert Houston hath heretofore gave Bond or obligation to the Wardens of the said Court for conveyance of the same, etc." The description mentions one line as being on the s. w. side of the church.

In order to determine the boundaries of the land owned by Christ Church a quit-claim deed was executed on Jan. 2, 1891, by Wm. H. Chipman and Wm. H. O'Neal, the adjoining owners. At that time permanent boundary markers were set in place in accordance with this deed.

In the early days this church had a nickname variously quoted as "Old Lightwood, Old Light'ard and Old Lighterknot." The nickname is presumed to have been derived from the fact that lightwood knots were used for illumination.

It is a fine example of Colonial church architecture. It has the old high pulpit and the square family pews. Except for necessary repairs, it stands today as originally built, "changeless in a changing world." A Centenary celebration was held on July 2, 1873. The number of trustees was increased on Nov. 4, 1912. The outside walls received their first coat of paint in 1941.

Since St. Philip's Church was built in Laurel, only two services are held each year. The first is held on Whitsunday and the second is held on the third Sunday in September. The church and graveyard are well cared for by Christ Church League of which Daniel K. Short is the treasurer. Former Governor Nathaniel Mitchell is buried in a vault close to the church. The Rev. Hamilton Bell who died in 1811 is buried in a vault to the rear of the church. He founded St. Paul's Church at Georgetown and St. John's Church at Little Hill.

**Broad Creek Primitive Baptist Church**, known locally for many years as "Benson's Old Side Church" is located six miles n. e. of Laurel. It was organized on May 31, 1781 and was the third church of that denomination in the State. The Rev. John Benson, from whom it got its popular name, was born, in Sussex County, on July 22, 1758. He was ordained on June 14, 1790. He then took charge of this church and of Gravelly Branch Church. The first churchbuilding was erected about 1800 on land purchased from John Benson.